

Cleaning and Sanitizing Meat Slicers

In 2008, an outbreak of foodborne illness caused by *Listeria* claimed the lives of 20 people and resulted in one of the largest recalls of food products in Canadian history. The subsequent investigation traced the bacteria to meat slicing equipment.



Bacteria that can cause Foodborne Illness can grow on equipment and utensils when they are not properly cleaned and sanitized. *Listeria* bacteria are particularly difficult to control because they multiply in cold temperatures, where other bacteria do not.

Clean and Sanitize Meat Slicers to Prevent the Spread of Bacteria:

Clean and sanitize meat slicers used at room temperature **at least every four hours** to help prevent the growth of disease-causing bacteria like *Listeria*.

- Cleaning is the removal of visible food debris, grease, and other materials. This may require the use of physical energy (scrubbing), heat, or chemicals.
- Sanitizing is a process in which bacteria are destroyed to a safe level. This can be done with food grade chemicals (i.e., chlorine bleach or Quaternary Ammonium).

How to Clean and Sanitize Meat Slicers:

Meat slicers are dangerous machines to use and to clean. Always follow your workplace safety procedures when using or cleaning equipment and when working with chemical sanitizers. The following suggested steps are not meant to replace the manufacturer's or your workplace's approved policies and procedures.

1. Unplug the machine (use a lockout box where necessary).
2. Set blade control to zero.
3. Put on safety gloves when cleaning blade.
4. Remove excess food waste by wiping or pre-rinsing.
5. Disassemble the machine.
6. Use hot water and soap to clean machine surfaces.
7. Rinse to remove loose food waste, grease, and detergent.
8. Sanitize machine surfaces using an approved sanitizer at the appropriate concentration. Ensure test strips are used to verify concentration. Approved sanitizers include:
 - Chlorine at 100ppm
 - Quaternary ammonium (QUAT) at 200ppm
 - Iodine at 25ppm
9. Allow the items to air dry if possible, otherwise use clean paper towels.
10. Reassemble machine and cover when not in use.

Public Health Ontario's [Practices for Cleaning and Sanitizing Meat Slicers to Control Listeria](#)

For more information, please contact your Public Health Inspector
at Southwestern Public Health.